



Governor Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor Adam Gregg
San Wong, Director

MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSION OF ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER AFFAIRS (CAPI)

Date: Saturday, July 28, 2018

Time: Noon – 5:00 PM

Location: McGrath Amphitheatre
475 1st St SW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401

Commissioners Present:

Ben Jung, Chair – *West Des Moines*
James Suong – *Des Moines*
Karlai Thornburg – *Ames*
Michelle Yoshimura-Smith – *Des Moines*
Suresh Basnet – *Cedar Rapids*

Absent:

Peggy La – *Sioux City*
Ritu Gurung - *Davenport*

DHR/CAS/API Staff:

Tina Shaw, Executive Officer for Office of Asian & Pacific Islander Affairs/CAS

Public Attendance:

Members of the Asian population and other festival attendees in Cedar Rapids visited with CAPI as part of its “listening session” concurrent with the Asian Fest hosted by the Eastern Iowa Chapter of the Iowa Asian Alliance. Over 14 Asian countries were represented as part of the festival with an overall 3,500 people attending. A DHR resources table drew people to learn more about the work of the Commission and programs provided by DHR, as well as Cedar Rapids-area resources on senior caregiving – a priority of the Commission.

I. Call to Order

Chair Jung called the business portion of meeting to order at 3:02 PM. Commissioners Jung, Suong, Thornburg, Yoshimura-Smith and Basnet present. Absent: Gurung, La. Quorum present.

II. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

Jung motioned, seconded by Basnet to approve the minutes from the 6/16/18 meeting. Unanimous consent. **Motion carried.** Minutes will be posted to the DHR-CAPI website.

III. CAPI Three-Year Priorities – Status Discussion

The Commission discussed each of the five strategic public policy areas:

Health Care: For many low-income people, the key to obtaining care at county hospitals is to qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). All county hospitals in Iowa, like Broadlawns Hospital in Des Moines serving all Polk County residents and Eastern Iowa Health Center serving all Linn County residents, has a patient intake coordinator who specializes in working with a diverse population and health insurance companies. Jung inquired whether the Iowa Insurance Division would consider insurance for a select population.

Naturalization: Elderly refugees from Southeast Asia are utilizing a naturalization pathway that takes into consideration age and/or disability. The USCIS policy is to consider waivers or accommodations for those who meet the 65/20 rule – 65 year of age or older with 20 years of US residency as a legal permanent resident. They are permitted to take a different version of the test and may take the test in their native tongue. Often, a translator is allowed to accompany an elder to the testing. In the case of the 50/20 and 55/15 rules, USCIS requires the civics test, but the applicant is exempt from the English Language Requirement.

In the case of a disability, applicants may file a Form N-648 (Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions) to attach to the naturalization form (N-400) that is certified by a medical professional that the applicant cannot meet English requirement, the civics requirement, or both requirements. Discussion took place on targeting education efforts to senior APIs seeking naturalization.

Shaw informed CAPI of two USCIS grants recently announced that will provide up to \$10 million in grants for citizenship preparation programs in communities across the country: 1) Citizenship Instruction and Naturalization Application Services; and 2) The Refugee and Asylee Assimilation Program.

US Census 2020: Shaw shared a checklist from office files outlining the Commission's role in the previous 2010 decennial census. The state of Iowa's Complete Count Commission is led by the Governor's Office and State Data Center; CAPI/Office of API entered into a Partnership Agreement to conduct the following last cycle:

- "Organize and/or serve on a Complete Count Committee;
- Identify job candidates, distribute and display recruiting materials;
- Encourage persons to return their questionnaire;
- Display/distribute 2010 Census promotional materials;
- Issue public endorsement for the 2010 Census and send endorsement to members or affiliates;
- Place 2010 Census articles in publications. Donate space for census advertisements;
- Provide speaking opportunities and exhibit space at conferences or trade shows;
- Sponsor community events to promote 2010 Census participation;
- Participate in a speaker's bureau for the 2010 Census;
- Allow the Census Bureau to post your organization's name on the 2010 Census Web site;
- Provide link to the 2010 Census Web site from your organization's site;

- Use 2010 Census drop-in articles, messages and logos in newsletters, mailing and other in-house communications (email, Web site, etc.);
- Appoint a liaison to work with the Census Bureau;
- Provide volunteers for census promotional events;
- Put the 2010 Census on meeting agendas and/or allow presentations by the Census Bureau staff;
- Use and distribute educational materials;
- Provide a translator/translate 2010 Census material;
- Participate in 2010 Census kick-off meetings;
- Highlight key 2010 Census operational events in newsletters or other publications;
- Participate in Census Bureau-sponsored events.”

In preparation for the 2020 count, the State Data Center informed the DHR that conversations have begun with the regional Chicago office to relaunch and forge new partnerships in Iowa. However, the process is behind schedule this cycle due to a citizenship question proposed by the U.S. Department of Commerce. The new, proposed question has not been field tested and is being challenged by many national organizations and states – including the Iowa Attorney General’s Office.

Shaw informed CAPI of the open nomination period to serve on the [Bureau of the Census - National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic, and Other Populations](#) that opened 6/4/18 and closes on 8/3/18.

Jung offered to contact [David Hung](#) in Kansas City, Missouri who now serves as the Region VII Midwest Representative for the White House Initiative on Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI) whom he met several years ago while serving on a working group to discuss the implications of this census.

Economic & Workforce Development: Future Ready Iowa Regional Summits were announced in nine communities: Atlantic, Burlington, Davenport, Denison, Fort Dodge, Muscatine, Pella, Sheffield and Spencer. Others summits are expected in addition to these forums. Goal of the summits is to provide an opportunity for local and regional partners to come together and discuss potential solutions based on needs and challenges.

IV. Announcements & Miscellaneous

A. Commissioner Reports

1. Data Report

Thornburg explained the current RFP for a data project underway by DHR to develop a Status Report for the populations served by DHR. Thornburg was selected to be on the proposal review committee to procure a data analysis and research vendor. The committee scored four companies who submitted bids for the project.

2. Immigrant Entrepreneurs Summit

Jung reported that the Immigrant Entrepreneurs Summit (IES) organization has expanded into Illinois and that an Iowa-Illinois border (Quad Cities/Moline) event was taking place this weekend. It is the first such event outside of Iowa and seeks to include the large Hispanic and African American populations in this densely-populated area.

3. Eastern Chapter – Iowa Asian Alliance

Basnet provided a historical perspective on the origins of the Cedar Rapids Asian Fest and affiliation with the Iowa Asian Alliance. In 2006, Basnet was the first president when the API community gathered in an organized way around an annual picnic. Today, the organization is growing, thriving under the leadership of a very solid board and community activists. Basnet credited San Wong, Kim Poam-Logan and Cindy Chen, among others, for their support in launching an eastern chapter in the early days and ensuring its viability even today.

4. Cooking Competition

Yoshimura-Smith announced a date has been set in November for the Des Moines Pho King Cook Off. Details will be posted on the [Iowa Asian Alliance website](#).

B. Office Report

1. Future Ready Iowa

Shaw plans to attend the Pella and Spencer summits and encouraged commissioners to attend a summit to be a voice for the API community on workforce and training issues. Marshallese residing in Ottumwa were encouraged to also attend the Pella summit.

2. EducAsian

Vinh Nguyen of Des Moines Public Community Schools District and Shaw met with a Burmese family navigator who provided guidance on what would interest community members. Shaw met with members of the Bhutanese community who are not sure of interest levels among the youth and parents in their community at this time. The Burmese, Bhutanese and Vietnamese communities are among those who would benefit from the proposed EducAsian Initiative to generate awareness of education and training after high-school. At this time, the draft proposal includes a series of site visits to employers, colleges and training programs in central Iowa in addition to mentorships and an awards/recognition program.

V. Community Listening Session concurrent with Cedar Rapids Asian Fest

[Held concurrently with the Commission meeting. Chair Jung provided remarks on the main stage and spoke of CAPI's scope and charge to represent APIs in Iowa and develop public policy that is inclusive.]

VI. Next CAPI meeting

The next meeting date and location has yet to be established. Shaw will send out a poll with Saturday options in September.

VII. Adjournment

Yoshimura-Smith motioned, seconded by Thornburg to adjourn the meeting at 3:54 PM.
Unanimous consent. ***Motion carried.***